

Attorney Docket No. 10559-360001  
Application No. 09/820,564  
Amendment dated May 4, 2004  
Reply to Office Action dated February 4, 2004

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the above-referenced application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3 and 8 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Turnbull. In response, claim 1 has been amended to define additional limitations which distinguish over the cited prior art. Specifically, claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the first telephone is recognized as a master telephone and subsequent telephones are recognized as slave telephones. Claim 1 now also recites detecting the call feature requested by the slave telephone. The master determines whether to grant access to the slave telephone.

This latter feature is not taught or suggested by Turnbull.

Turnbull appears to suggest that any of the stations can become a master or slave depending on which grabs the line. However, the relationship between master and slave is very different in Turnbull as compared with the present system. According to Turnbull, the master sends voice data from both itself and from the slave (see, column 6, lines 41-42). There is no teaching or suggestion that the slave sends a call feature request and the master decides whether to grant it. Rather, the

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relation between the master and slave in Turnbull appears to be based on which telephone sends the information, and synchronization between the telephones (see, generally, column 7, lines 54-67). Nowhere is there any teaching or suggestion of the slave requesting a call feature, and the master deciding whether to grant that call feature. Therefore, claim 1 should be allowable for these reasons.

Claim 8 has been amended to recite similar subject matter; specifically, that the first phone which requests a call feature automatically becomes the master, and another phone which requests a call feature becomes a slave which can receive commands from the master, receiving a call feature from a slave and using the master to determine whether that call feature will be granted. Such is in no way taught or suggested by the cited prior art.

Each of the dependent claims should be allowable by virtue of their dependency from the respective independent claims. In addition, claim 5 stands rejected over Turnbull in view of Armstrong. Claim 6 stands rejected over Turnbull in view of Bleile. Claim 7 stands rejected over Turnbull in view of Lee. Each of the secondary references teach various aspects of the telephone circuit. However, the basic subject matter discussed

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above is not taught or suggested. Therefore, each of these claims should be allowable for similar reasons.

Claim 14-22 stand rejected under 35 USC 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Bartholet in view of Turnbull. Claim 14 has been amended to recite, analogously to the above, that the phone that makes a request is designated as a master phone, and that the master phone can grant requests made by all the other phones. This is not taught or suggested by the hypothetical combination of prior art. Bartholet admittedly uses a controller that decides how to operate his system. The rejection admits, and this is in fact correct, that Bartholet teaches nothing about designating one phone as a master and another as a slave. Therefore, it is apparent that Bartholet teaches nothing about using the master phone to grant requests made by other phones. The rejection uses Turnbull as a combination document to show the master/slave concepts.

However, as described above, nothing in Turnbull is in any way suggestive of using the master, determined in this way, to determine if other call requests can be granted. Therefore, the hypothetical combination of Bartholet in view of Turnbull similarly does not teach or suggest these features.

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The dependent claims should be allowable for similar reasons to those discussed above with respect to the respective independent claims.

In addition, claims 23-28 are newly presented herein, and define additional aspects which are in no way taught or suggested by the cited prior art. Claims 23, 25 and 27 define that the request is actually taking the phone off hook, while the remaining claims define that the decision whether to grant access is a decision whether to grant access to an outside line. These are further patentable over the cited prior art.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed in this paper. However, failure to address a specific rejection, issue or comment, does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above are not intended to be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, there, all of

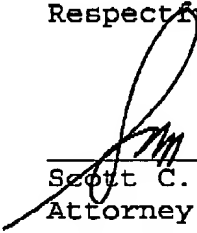
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the claims should be in condition for allowance. A formal  
notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.

Please apply any charges or credits to Deposit Account  
No. 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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